

Mr. Speaker, it brings me great pleasure to congratulate Thelma for this phenomenal achievement. She is an exceptional individual and I wish her only the best and continued prosperity. Happy Birthday Thelma!

OPPRESSION OF AFGHAN WOMEN

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my distress over the oppression of Afghan women. These women, who only won their freedom for a few years in all of history, have been driven back into oppression by a brutal, violent and blindly ignorant regime. Forced by the Taliban out of the schools allowed by former ruler Nur Mohammed Taraki, women are now uneducated. Women cannot work, but can be forced to beg for bread.

Women are forbidden to sing or listen to music, and will be viciously beaten if seen in public with men who are not relatives. Women in today's Afghanistan cannot be treated by a male doctor, and will be killed if they are treated by one. The life expectancy of Afghan women is 43, almost half that of American women. This vicious oppression is not the will of God or of any decent man.

Women have been oppressed throughout the ages by every society on earth, but have gone a long way toward gaining freedom and dignity. Afghanistan's brutal rulers and their fundamentalist counterparts in other religions must not be allowed to destroy the lives, the futures, and the honor of women.

This Congress must support these desperate victims and any counterparts they have in any other part of the world. People of faith from every nation and every religion must unite to end all use of twisted religious rhetoric, to oppress any person. We must apply this principle to Afghanistan now, and to our own lives everyday.

TRIBUTE TO BOB LARSON, FOUNDER OF NORTHWOODS AIRLIFELINE

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Michigan resident Bob Larson, a man who turned his own passion for flying into a non-profit, lifesaving organization that serves the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Bob is the prime mover behind Northwoods Airlifeline, an organization of pilots who volunteer their time and aircraft to help obtain medical assistance unavailable in Upper Michigan. Since Bob conceived the service in 1989, Northwoods Airlifeline has flown more than 1,100 missions—all free of charge, Mr. Speaker—to destinations all around the Midwest.

Northwoods Airlifeline fills a gap in critical services by transporting patients who may be financially distressed, who may be unable to travel by car or commercial transportation, or who for medical reasons may face severe time constraints.

The primary need of individuals served by Northwoods Airlifeline has been organ transplants, since there is no facility in Upper Michigan to perform this procedure. The service has also met the needs of chronically-ill people who cannot afford to fly or drive long distances, and it has transported medical patients who are beyond medical help to be with their loved ones.

Bob Larson, a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a World War II Navy veteran, took flying lessons after he left the service and went to work in Chicago, where he bought his first plane in 1958.

But Bob, along with Ruth, his wife of 57 years, who is a registered nurse, eventually moved back to the North Woods, settling in the small town of Witch Lake in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The Larsons shared a dream of forming an air medical service to assist friends and neighbors in times of medical emergency.

From these two caring, giving, loving individuals Northwoods Airlifeline was born, and it is still coordinated by Bob today. The organization recruits volunteer pilots, operates a dispatching network to receive and fill requests for transportation, and conducts community education and fund raising programs for its services. There are no salaried personnel or rental expenses. Pilots and volunteers absorb fuel costs and other expenses, and all donations go toward the administrative costs of transporting those in need.

The high regard in which the service is held can be summed up in the comments of a man who was flown out of state for a surgical procedure, "Well, I have met some real-life angels, wings included," he said, "only their wings are attached to the airplanes they fly."

Bob Larson is being honored on Oct. 20 by Iron Mountain Chapter #44, Order of the Eastern Star, which has selected him as the 13th recipient of the annual Eastern Star Community Service Award. The purpose of the award is to recognize an individual, not affiliated with any Masonic or Masonic-related organization, who has shown unselfish dedication for the betterment of the community and the world in general.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage you and all our House colleagues to go on the World Wide Web at www.northwoodsairlifeline.org and read about the other men and women who make this vital service possible, and read the wonderful stories of the families that Northwoods Airlifeline has assisted.

We say that dreamers have their heads in the clouds, Mr. Speaker, but maybe it's up in the clouds, where Bob Larson spent so much time, that one gains the best perspective of the world and the place of each individual in it. So I ask you to join me in celebrating the accomplishments of two dreamers, Bob and Ruth Larson, and the wonderful volunteer organization they have brought into being.

ON INTRODUCTION OF THE TERRORIST RESPONSE TAX EXEMPTION ACT

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I rise with my colleague, Congressman VITO

FOSSELLA of New York, to introduce the Terrorist Response Tax Exemption Act, which would provide our first responders with the tax benefits that they deserve for serving on the front lines of our war against terrorism.

As we speak, men and women are putting their lives at risk to fight terrorist threats both abroad and at home. For the American military personnel who are overseas, the federal government currently excludes from taxable income the salary they receive in any month they serve in a combat zone. This is a suitable recognition of the increased risk in which they place themselves to protect our freedoms and of the increased burdens on their families given that risk.

But, today, we know that the men and women who serve as fire, rescue, and police personnel can be just as much at risk. Terrorists have brought the frontlines into our communities, and it is these first responders that are first on the scene, first to assess the situation, and first to respond to the needs of the victims. As the World Trade Center attack has proven, they are just as much in jeopardy of losing their lives as the soldiers and sailors engaged overseas—perhaps even more so as our military technology advances. They and their families deserve the same tax benefits for serving in terrorist attack zones.

That is precisely what the Terrorist Response Tax Exemption Act does. It exempts from federal income the basic pay that a uniformed civilian employee earns for any month in which they serve the public in a terrorist attack zone. It provides well-deserved recognition of the hard and dangerous work that these individuals perform. The Senate companion bill, S. 1446, has already been endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and other organizations that represent our public safety personnel.

It is not that we anticipate that this tax incentive will encourage this kind of heroic public service. In fact, we know for a fact that these men and women perform their duties out of a sense of honor and an overwhelming desire to help others in need. But, we should show them our gratitude with more than words of thanks. I encourage my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this legislation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ANTHONY T. CAPOZZOLO

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor the life and memory of Anthony T. "Capps" Capozzolo, a man who always sought to brighten the horizons for others, especially through increasing educational opportunities.

Born at his father's dairy farm in Pueblo, Colorado, Capps learned what hard work was at a very early age. At one time, he sold newspapers while attending school and tending to the chores of his family's farm. Capps followed his heart, however, and proved to be a fantastic dancer. At the age of 18, Capps left Pueblo and joined his brother in California where he pursued his passion for dancing. It was here that he met his dance partner, Theresa Harmon, who would eventually become